VSNL's offer to private companies for laying fibre cable

2469. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the VSNL have invited responses from companies laying fibre to buy band-with a dark fibre or an entire duct; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far on the subject?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The tender for the work was floated on 14th June, 2001 and the bids were invited till 23rd July, 2001. The technical evaluation of bids is currently in progress.

Debarring VSNL from bidding for fourth cellular license

2470. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:
SHRI PRAFUL PATEL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether VSNL has been barred from bidding for Fourth Cellular License; and -

(b) if so, the reasons therefor while MTNL or BSNL has been allowed to operate Cellular Services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) Sir, the tenders for grant of fresh licenses for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS), *inter-alia*, stipulated the following condition:

"No single company/legal person, either directly or through its associates, shall have substantial equity holding in more than one licensee company in the same service area for the same service. 'Substantial equity' herein will mean 'an equity of 10% or more'. A promoter company can not have stakes in more than one licensee company for the same service area."

The said tender condition had been built to ensure that competition is not compromised.

Further, the tender document also stipulated that "The Licensor reserves the right to operate CMTS itself or through a designated public authority, in any or all the service areas."

It was also clarified to the prospective bidders that 'public authoirty' means entity/authority/organization/enterprise controlled by the Government, *e.g.* a public sector undertaking. Only one such entity may be permitted to operate the service in a given service area.

Since, either Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited or Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, which are public sector undertakings, have already got licences for CMTS to cover whole of the country, VSNL was not eligible for grant of the licence.

Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Yojana Kendras in Gujarat

2471. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Gram Panchayats willing to introduce Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Yojana Kendras (PSSYKs) in Gujarat;

(b) the number of PSSYKs proposed to be set up in the State; and

(c) the number of PSSYKs yet to be set up and by when the work will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) 133 Gram Panchayats expressed willingness to avail facility of Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras (PSSKs) and accordingly 133 Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras (PSSKs) were set up upto 31-03-2001.

(b) and (c) A target of setting up 90 new Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras has been fixed for Gujarat Circle for the year 2001-2002.

Out of order telephones due to rain

2472. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to heavy rain, thousands of telephones become out of order every year;

(b) the steps Government are taken to avoid such recurrence every monsoon; and

(c) the reasons for such things happening every year and the persons responsible for this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) Proper coordination with the Civic agencies like water works, electricity department etc.;